

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A data management method comprising:
receiving a request to image a document through an electronic cover
that holds data elements related to the document content, wherein the
data elements are dynamic to reflect updates to the document content;
processing the cover [[for]] of the document [[, by]] for validating the
data elements related to the document;
based on the validated data elements in the cover, automatically
collecting data and populating at least some data fields in the cover by
linking the at least some data fields to independent software applications;
and
storing at least some of the data populated in the cover;
for automatic reuse of the at least some of the data populated in the
cover by integrated applications, for preventing to prevent re-entry of
the at least some of the populated data in the integrated applications;
and
for reuse of the at least some of the data populated in the cover as
index values, to assist in storing the document and to further assist in
searching for, and locating the document, based on the document
content.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further including reusing the data populated in the cover by automatically indexing the populated data in an imaging application.

3. (Previously presented) The method of claim 2, further including using the cover to review the request.

4. (Previously presented) The method of claim 2, further including using the cover to update a request status.

5. (Previously presented) The method of claim 2, further including using the cover to initiate a workflow for subsequent processing.

6. (Previously presented) The method of claim 3, further including feeding collected data to one or more integrated software applications.

7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein processing the electronic cover includes setting an electronic checklist to validate critical data elements related to the document.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the critical data elements include a customer number.

9. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the critical data elements include a contract number.

10. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the critical data elements include a mode of transmittal.

11. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the critical data elements include a new transaction.

12. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the critical data elements include an update.

13. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the information contained in the cover includes a customer master record.

14. (Currently amended) A computer program having a plurality of executable instruction codes on a computer readable medium, comprising:

a first set of program instructions for receiving a request to image a document through an electronic cover form that holds data elements related to the document content, wherein the data elements are dynamic to reflect updates to the document content;

a second set of program instructions for processing the cover form [[for]] of the document [[, by]] for validating the data elements related to the document;

a third set of program instructions for automatically collecting data and populating at least some data fields in the cover form as a function of the validated data elements in the cover form, by linking the at least some

data fields to independent software applications; and

a fourth set of program instructions for storing at least some of the data populated in the cover form:

for automatically reusing the data populated in the cover form at least some of the data populated in the cover form by integrated software applications, for preventing to prevent re-entry of the at least some of the populated data in the integrated software applications; and

for reusing the at least some of the data populated in the cover form as index values, to assist in storing the document and to further assist in searching for, and locating the document, based on the document content.

15. (Previously presented) The computer program of claim 14, wherein the fourth set of program instructions reuses the data populated in the cover form by automatically indexing the populated data in an imaging application.

16. (Previously presented) The computer program of claim 15, wherein the integrated software applications use the cover form to perform any one or more of the following steps: reviewing a submission; updating a status of a request; and initiating a workflow for subsequent processing.

17. (Previously presented) The computer program of claim 14, wherein the electronic cover form includes an electronic checklist that validates critical data elements related to the document.

18. (Previously presented) The computer program of claim 17, wherein the critical data elements include any one or more of: a customer number, a contract number, a mode of transmittal, a new transaction, and an update.

19. (Original) The computer program of claim 14, wherein the information contained in the cover form includes a customer master record.

20. (Currently amended) A data management system for use in a computer to integrate the operation of a plurality of independent software applications, comprising:

means for receiving a request to image a document through an electronic cover page that holds data elements related to the document content, wherein the data elements are dynamic to reflect updates to the document content;

means for processing the cover page [[for]] of the document [[, by]] for validating the data elements related to the document;

means for automatically collecting data and populating at least some data fields in the cover page, based on the validated data elements in the cover page, by linking the at least some data fields to the independent software applications; and

means for storing at least some of the data populated in the cover page:

for automatic reuse of the at least some of the data populated in the cover page by integrated applications, for preventing to prevent re-

entry of the at least some of the populated data in the integrated applications; and

for reuse of the at least some of the data populated in the cover page as index values, to assist in storing the document and to further assist in searching for, and locating the document, based on the document content.